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ABSTRACT

This module provides readers with a comprehensive view of the historical development of education in Puerto Rico, including the present. Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to (a) describe significant historical developments of the educational system in Puerto Rico, (b) compare/contrast philosophical and structural differences between island and mainland schools, and (c) analyze the relationship of Puerto Rico's collective "identity crisis" to the teaching of English on the island. The student completes a preassessment test, chooses tasks from a list of alternatives, and concludes the module with a postassessment test. (A five-item bibliography is included.) (PB)

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TEACHER CORPS BILINGUAL PROJECT
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
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MODULAR SEQUENCE:
PUERTO RICAN PUPILS
IN MAINLAND SCHOOLS

TTP 003.07 THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN PUERTO RICO

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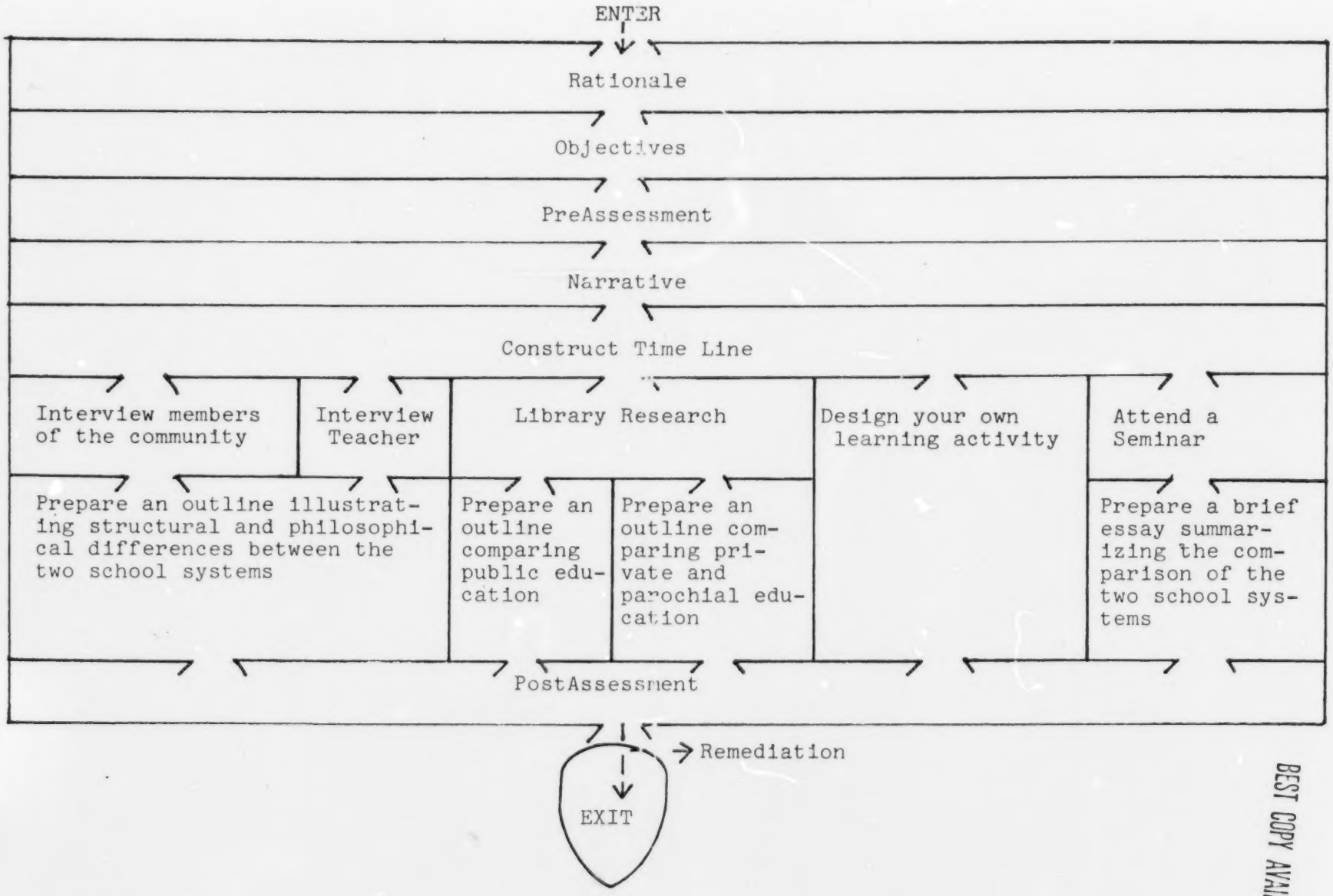

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RATIONALE

This unit of work provides the reader with a comprehensive view of the historical development of education in Puerto Rico. In addition, it presents a broad picture of the main educational institutions, public and private, which serve to educate Puerto Ricans today. It is hoped that this unit of work will help the reader gain a better understanding of the Puerto Rican through an increased awareness of Puerto Rico's rich educational heritage.

OBJECTIVES

Given a series of learning activities on Education in Puerto Rico, the participant will be able to:

- -describe significant historical developments of the educational system in Puerto Rico.
- -compare/contrast philosophical and structural differences between Island and Mainland schools.
- -analyze the relationship of Puerto Rico's collective "identity crisis" to the teaching of English on the Island.

Prerequisites: None.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

To assess your prior mastery of the terminal objectives of this unit of work, complete the following exercise. Your performance on this assessment will determine which learning tasks you are to perform.

Directions: Answer the following questions according to the directions noted in each:

I. Prepare a brief essay on the most significant historical developments of the educational system in Puerto Rico.

II. Prepare an outline or chart illustrating the philosophical and structural comparison of Island and Mainland schools.

III. Prepare a brief essay on the relationship of Puerto Rico's collective "identity crisis" to the teaching of English on the Island.

I. Learning Alternatives:

A. Read attached narrative:

Ramirez de Arellano y Lynch, Rafael. "Education in Puerto Rico: The Past and the Present."

Activity: Construct a time line illustrating the dates of the most significant historical developments of the educational system in Puerto Rico. You may want to focus your attention on the following questions as you read:

1. How long has Puerto Rico been involved in education?
2. When were the first schools established in Puerto Rico?
3. Which sectors of the population were the first to receive an education in Puerto Rico?
4. How many places had schools in Puerto Rico by 1765?
5. What were, in your opinion, the most important directives of Governor Muesas' reorganization of the Island's educational system in 1770?
6. What was the status of education in Puerto Rico by the end of the 18th century?
7. Why was the 19th century a period of enormous growth for Puerto Rico's educational system?
8. Can you name five important developments regarding educational opportunities in Puerto Rico between 1816 and 1846?
9. What were some of the Ateneo Puertorriqueno's contributions to furthering education in Puerto Rico?
10. When were high schools opened on a large scale

in Puerto Rico?

11. What were some of the important directives of Governor Pezuela's reorganization of the schools in 1851?

12. What was the function of the Instituto de Segunda Ensenanza?

13. How did the United States reorganize Puerto Rican schools?

14. What brought about the creation of Colegios Regionales?

15. How is Puerto Rico's collective "identity crisis" related to the teaching of English on the Island?

B. Select <u>one</u> of the following:

1. Interview members of the Puerto Rican community in your area who have attended schools on the Island and on the Mainland. Ask them to elaborate on differences they have noticed regarding structure and philosophy of the two systems. Prepare an outline or chart illustrating these differences.

or

2. Interview a Puerto Rican teacher in your area who has taught in schools on the Island and on the Mainland. Ask him/her to elaborate on structural and philosophical differences between the two systems. Prepare an outline or chart illustrating these differences.

or

3. Do library research and prepare one of the following:

   a) An outline or chart comparing Puerto Rico's public educational offerings with those of your state.

   b) An outline or chart comparing Puerto Rico's private and/or parochial educational offerings with those of your state.

or

4. Design your own learning activity.

or

5. Attend a seminar as scheduled by your module coordinator. Prepare a brief essay summarizing the philosophical and structural Island and Mainland school systems.

POST-ASSESSMENT

Directions: Answer the following questions according to the directions noted in each:

I. Prepare a brief essay on the most significant historical developments of the educational system in Puerto Rico.

II. Prepare an outline or chart illustrating the philosophical and structural comparison of Island and Mainland schools.

III. Prepare a brief essay on the relationship of Puerto Rico's collective "identity crisis" to the Teaching of English on the Island.

Competency will be certified when your module coordinator has ascertained that the submitted post-assessment is of acceptable quality.

Remediation: Alternate learning activities are available on a contractual basis with the module coordinator.

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NARRATIVE

"Education in Puerto Rico:
The Past and the Present"

-- Rafael W. Ramirez-de-Arellano y Lynch

I. THE PAST: 1493-1800

The story of education in Puerto Rico is one of the oldest in the chronicles of American History. In order to narrate it, one must go back almost to the time of the European discovery of Puerto Rico, the 19th of November, 1943. In fact, when Spain decided to settle Puerto Rico permanently, in 1509, among the instructions of Don Juan Ponce de Leon, the Island's first Governor, dated May 2 of the same year, are found very specific orders regarding education for Puerto Ricans.

According to Ponce de Leon's instructions, "the Provincial Father of the Franciscans was to send clergy, that he would pay them from the tithe fund and that the clergy should: 1) baptize the Indians of Puerto Rico; 2) teach them Christian Doctrine; 3) teach Castilian (Spanish) grammar, beginning with the children of the Indian chiefs (caciques)." These instructions were confirmed later by Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Spain in an Ordenanza or decree regarding Indians in Puerto Rico (under his charge) should teach one of them, a boy, to read, write and to know Christian Doctrine, and if any person should want to

use an Indian boy as a page, he must be obliged to teach him the same." Furthermore, Article 17 goes on to state "that all sons of chiefs (caciques) are to be turned over to the Franciscan friars, who will teach them to read and write together with Christian Doctrine...."

These preliminary instructions of the Spanish rulers were put into effect at once, and according to a chronicle and description of Puerto Rico in 1582, prepared for King Philip II of Spain, classes were being held at the Santa Clara Hospital of San Juan "which was without patients" and that grammar was taught together with Christian Doctrine."

By 1647 there were two school operating in San Juan for the benefit of the residents and also for students of a religious vocation. One of the schools had opened in 1589; the other, sponsored by the religious order of the Dominicans, opened in 1645. Additional instruction was offered by a certain Don Jose de Jarava, who taught boys of the residents of San Juan in the Parish House. Spanish grammar, the Arts, Christian Doctrine and Latin formed the curriculum of these early schools.

As the population and settling of Puerto Rico grew, so did education. By 1765 the two large settlements of San Juan and San German boasted two schools for boys in addition to the schools of the Convents where the friars

taught Latin, Theology and Philosophy. There were other settlements as well, although much smaller than the original two. At the time, Arecibo, Coamo, Tuna, Manati, Utuado, Aguada, Anasco, Ponce, Toa-Baja, Toa-Alta, Bayamon, Caguas, Guayama, La Piedras, Loiza, Rio Piedras, and Cangrejos had come to life, and all of the residents of these palces enjoyed the benefits of elementary schools which were available to male children according to the dispositions of the General Directive to the Tenientes a Guerra (military rulers) in charge of these localities. This General Directive was an attempt of the Governor of Puerto Rico, Don Miguel de Muesas to reorganize, in 1770, the educational system of the Island, as may be gathered from the text, which I reproduced in part.

> "(The Tenientes a Guerra) will see to it that in their respective territory (partido) a person of good credentials and reputation be dedicated to the teaching of boys, the obligation of every father being to send at least one of two boys to the school, and he is to keep them in it until they know how to read and write, at least, and the father may only withdraw them from school after the teacher has certified that the child has obtained staisfactory instruction in that obligation.
>
> "So that such important goals be realized, and so that there be enough people to apply themselves to the teaching of boys, fathers will pay a tax of 100 pesos for the salary of the teacher, who will be paid every four months, and each father may also send to the school his other boys, as it may suit him; the Teniente a Guerra is in charge of paying the teacher his salary.
>
> "The teacher must establish his school in the most accessible place, and he must admit in it, without

discrimination, all of the boys sent to him, be they white, black or brown....

"The teacher shall treat them with sweetness and prudence, give them a good example...so that they be devout, pious, sociable and courteous with his elders, especially fearful of God and the King, and obedient to the Justice Officials; furthermore, he should only punish them in a way which corresponds to their age and degree of misbehavior.

"The boys are to be instructed in Christian Doctrine; and to be taught how to read, write and count to the best of their ability, so that they in time will be useful to the country.

"The teacher must also make inquiries as to whether there are children capable of doing school work, and inform the Teniente a Guerra or the officer in command of the Militia, so that fathers be obliged to send such children to school."

These provisions of Governor Muesas established the basis for a school system in which:

1) the teacher was paid regularly;

2) fathers were to send at least one boy to school, with an option of sending the rest;

3) the curriculum was established from a central authority which prescirbed courses in religious instruction plus reading, writing and arithmetic (the three R's);

4) the teacher was expected to provide discipline, treat his pupils kindly and justly, teach good manners and give a good example for this himself.

5) patriotism: respect for king, country and establish authority was taught to all;

6) racism was discouraged officially by requiring that boys of all races be sent to the same school. This would go a long way towards creating and explaining the spirit of racial harmony which exists in Puerto Rico up to the present time.

To summarize, Spain applied a centralized pattern of education from the very beginning. This pattern reflected

the Spanish policy of integrating ruled territories into the Spanish system of life. The education of children was to be an important part of this policy of creating "new Spaniards." Consequently, schooling of children in Puerto Rico, a new territory, would be similar to that provided for children in Spain: religious instruction, reading, writing, arithmetic, good manners and patriotism. The Church in Puerto Rico would play a large role in education, just as it has traditionally in Spain. All education took place under the direct supervision of the Spanish Monarchy through its officials in Puerto Rico. Its progress and subsequent growth would be a direct reflection of this centralized system of government. This principle of authority would be applied to Higher Education as well, which, like Primary Education, would be entrusted to religious orders in it beginnings.

Higher Education began in Puerto Rico in 1645 sponsored by the Dominican Provincial Friar Jorge Cambero, a native of San Juan. Students would prepare for College at the Dominican Convent. After obtaining the necessary preparation, the sutdents would go on to the universities of Santo Domingo and Caracas for their professional training.

II. THE PAST: 1800-1898

The 19th century would be a period of enormous growth for Puerto Rico. The population would rise to almost one

million at the end of the century, and together with the growth in the activities of this expanding society would come a corresponding growth in educational opportunities at all levels. The educational offerings would not be as limited as in the preceding centuries, which had only catered to boys of free men. By the second half of the century, education at the primary level would be compulsory to children of both sexes, boys and girls, even though they would not be taught together and would attend separate schools.

The wars of American Independence would have a profound effect on the Island. Madrid, with fewer territories to govern, would now tend to concentrate more on the remaining bits of its once vast empire. The Spanish Monarchs would now pay more attention to Puerto Rico, and, of course, this would include attention to education. The break with the former colonies would rupture Puerto Rican dependency on them for Higher Education. Now Puerto Ricans would feel a greater need for expanding educational opportunities within the professions in the Island, even if they still had to go abroad to Havana and Madrid for specialization.

The 19th century would see the birth of private instruction in Puerto Rico, as well as the expansion in public education. Many of the private schools would be Church sponsored, and these would have an enormous influence in the destiny of the Island.

A rapid glance at developments throughout the century bears testimony to this growth:

1816: A chair of Medicine is established in San Juan under the direction of Prof. Jose Espaillart. Shortly after this, the Franciscan Fathers obtained permission from the King to teach Medicine in their Convent.

1820: The first school for girls is established in San Juan under the direction of Dona Vicenta Erichson.

1821: The King establishes a Botanical Garden together with a chair in Agriculture with a professor from Madrid.

1822: Two chairs in Mathematics and Drawing are established in the Convent of San Francisco in San Juan.

1823: A chair in Civil Law is added under Prof. Pablo Arroyo Prichard due to the efforts of the Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais. The Franciscans would also add a chair in Experimental Physics.

1825: Father Rufo Manuel Fernandez, Professor of Experimental Physics in the University of Galicia, Spain, comes to Puerto Rico, and from his arrival is involved in the furthering of education for Puerto Ricans.

1834: Father Rufo opens courses in Physics and Chemistry in his laboratory under the sponsorship of the Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais.

1844: Father Rufo urges the Governor of Puerto Rico to establish a College or University. In order to get local staffing, students are to be sent to Madrid in 1846 with scholarships obtained with help from the S.E. de A. del P. Those who go include future men of prominence, like Roman Baldorioty de Castro and Jose Julian de Acosta.

1851: Governor Pezuela reorganizes the school system by:

1) giving competitive examinations to teachers who apply for teaching positions

in the system;

2) dividing the schools of the Island into three catagories, first, second, and third according to the local population to be served.

3) establishing the Academia Real de Buenas Letras as a central governing body for education in the Island. This body had vast powers, and eventually would even prescirbe textbooks for every course taught in the classroom.

4) linking promotion of teachers to a merit system that included several ranks or steps. This served to stimulate teachers to better themselves, as well as to attract new people into the profession.

1856: Governor Lemery names permanent inspectors to work as truant officers who are to convince parents of the need to send all children of eight or more years to school. He also opens Rural Schools so children will not have to travel far from their homes for schooling. In addition, Governor Lemery opens schools for the girls. Capable women were to teach sewing, embroidery, Christian Doctrine and reading; the other subjects were to be taught by a regular male teacher from the system.

1859: Texts in all the schools are standardized; most of these were by Puerto Rican authors.

1860: The census shows Puerto Rico had a population of 583,308 persons living in 69 towns. There 122 public schools and 25 private schools. The school population amount to 2,396 boys and 1,092 girls, taught by a staff of 142 teachers. After 1860 the system expanded rapidly, and by 1867 the number of students had grown to 10,081. These figures also include students attending schools for music and drawing, as well as vocational schools which had opened for boys and girls in 1856.

1865: The Real Academia de Bellas Letras is dissolved, and in its place a Junta Superior de Instruccion Publica is established to coordinate and administer education throughout the Island.

1866: Governor Marchesi opens High Schools in San Juan, Arecibo, Aguadilla, Mayaguez, Ponce, Guayama and Humacao. He also establishes elementary schools for girls in those places lacking them. By this date the total number of schools is 283, including 8 schools for adults. The High Schools offered the following curriculum to their students: Sacred History, History of Spain, History of Puerto Rico, World History, Geography of Puerto Rico, Geography of the Ancient World, Modern Geography, Arithmetic, Geometry, Metric System, Physics, Natural History, Agriculture and Agrimensure, Industrial Skills, Linear Drawing, Business, in addition to subjects related to Languages and the Arts.

1876: The Ateneo Puertorriqueno is founded, and would eventually offer College courses in its Institution together with other activities which would serve to propagate culture. This College curriculum would include Languages, Philosophy, The Arts, Sciences and Medicine.

1878: The school system of Puerto Rico is unified with that of Spain.

1882: The second Instituto de Segunda Ensenanza was opened in San Juan (the first one had never been permitted to operate on a permanent basis for political reasons). This was a college, sponsored by the Government, which offered pre-professional training to 432 students.

1883: Similar colleges were opened in Ponce and Mayaguez, and the total number of college students, including private and tutored, amounted to 1,045. The San Juan Instituto was allowed to give the degree of Bachiller en Artes (Bachelor of Arts). The students from the other colleges of the Island had to travel to San Juan for their final examination and to receive their B.A. diploma from the San Juan Instituto. Higher Education also included an Academy of Gentlemen Cadets of the Island of Puerto Rico, a military academy founded by the King in 1860 to train officers for the Spanish Army.

1897: The census shows a total of 32,450 children, 23,258 boys and 9,192 girls attending 475 public schools which were peppered throughout Puerto Rico, including Vieques, a small island off Puerto Rico. By the end of the 19th century, the basis for Puerto Rico's school system had not only been established, but had achieved a high level of development, reaching all sectors of the population. Most of the school children attended public school, but there were numerous private institutions as well, for those parents who so chose to send their children to these schools. The school system offered High School as well as Elementary, and it provided degree granting institutions at the university level together with auxiliary institutions of varied nature, designed to meet the needs of the population. The schools were staffed by very competent teachers who were, for the most part, natives of Puerto Rico. The buildings used for these schools were large, agreeable structures specifically designed for their intended purpose. Curricula were established by a central authority for the entire island, which was run, in effect, like one school district of the many in Spain. Puerto Rico, it must be pointed out, at the turn of the century, was receiving the same treatment regarding its school system, as any other province of Spain. This was perfectly normal since Puerto Ricans enjoyed all of the benefits of Spanish citizenship like their fellow citizens in the Spanish peninsula.

III. THE PRESENT: 1898-1974

The 25th of July, 1898, the first troops of the U.S. Army landed in Guanica, Puerto Rico, signaling the end of four centuries of Spanish rule in the Island. Puerto Rico was now a territory of the United States of America, subject to powers in Washington instead of Madrid. The Island would prove to be a challenge to the new rulers, who up to that time had followed a policy of territorial and cultural

espansion on a self-contained continent. In the North-American continent, the U.S. territorial policy had been on of "Americanizing" territories in the North-American West with settlers who implanted the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture, dispalcing, to a greater or lesser degree, the local cultures they encountered. But Puerto Rico was something new. It was not a contiguous territory like the previous one; it was an Island, very much settled, with a population of over 900,000 in 1900. Furthermore, Puerto Rico as a former province of Spain presented a highly developed society along western lines with a strong cultural identity.

Neverthless, the U.S.A. extended to Puerto Rico its policy of cultural displacement which, of course, would have its effects on the education of the local population. After over seventy-five years of U.S. rule, Education in Puerto Rico presents, like other institutions, the effects of the Anglo-Saxon culture, but instead of cultural displacement what is encountered is cultural convergence: the accomodation of the new, imposed from the outside, to the local Hispanic tradition. The product of this convergence is the Puerto Rican school system, which is very unique, having developed along traditional patterns within the structures or guidelines imposed from the U.S.A.

Today Puerto Rico's schools are administered as one school district, as in the past, but the methods, structure and programs reflect U.S. patterns. Now boys and girls are taught together in the same classrooms instead of being separated into groups according to sex. Schooling begins with Kindergarten, followed by six grades of Elementary School. After graduating from the sixth grade the students go on to Junior High School for three years. Having graduated from 9th grade, the students continue in High School for three more years, and after completing the 12th grade they graduate and receive their diplomas. An alternative program, also derived from the U.S.patterns, exists in some schools, most of which are private. In this program the students go through eight years of Elementary School, graduate from 8th grade and then go on to four years of High School, receiving their diplomas after completing the 12th grade.

After High School, the student may join the working forces, or, if qualified, may continue his education in any of several institutions of higher learning in the Island, where he may receive either liberal arts, vocational or pre-professional training, according to his wants and abilities.

Higher education in Puerto Rico presents a vast and formidable range of opportunities for the student, both in

the public and private sectors. So that all Puerto Ricans may be able to receive post secondary education at nominal cost, the local government has established a network of two year colleges throughout the Island as part of the University of Puerto Rico system. At the present time these Colegios Regionales (Regional Colleges) are established in Humacao, Arecibo, Ponce, Aguadilla and Bayamon. Others are soon to open in Carolina, Guayama and wherever the need for them may arise.

These Colegios Regionales offer different two year programs according to local conditions, but generally speaking they all include liberal arts programs which culminate in the Associate of Arts degree. After completing the two years at the Colegio Regional, the student may transfer to the Mayaguez or Rio Piedras campuses of the University of Puerto Rico in order to complete his pre-professional training in the Humanities, Sciences, Education or whatever field he may choose.

After obtaining the Bachelor's degree, the student may go on to obtain professional training in Medicine, Odontology, Pharmacy, Law, Engineering, Social Work, Education, Business, the Humanities and Sciences at the pertinent schools which are part of the University of Puerto Rico in either San Juan, Rio Piedras or Mayaguez, depending on the program chosen by the student.

The Colegios Regionales are the latest manifestation of the dynamic growth of Puerto Rico's University system. This network of colleges had its modest beginnings in Humacao, in 1962, serving around 2,000 students. Today, the total number of students attending the Regionales amounts to 10,000 with both sexes evenly represented.

The need for the Colegios Regionales arose when local authorities took note of the fact that over half of the students attending the University of Puerto Rico came from the San Juan Metropolitan Area. The solution to the geographical imbalance was the creation of the network of Regionales, and in just eleven years the proportion of students from outside the Metropolitan Area attending the University constitutes a majority of the total student population.

In addition to the available public offereings, Puerto Rico has numerous private schools, which form an important part of the Island's educational system. Even though they must follow certain guidelines of the Department of Education, for the most part, these private schools are, in fact, independent of governmental structures, and offer a wide range of programs according to their particular objectives.

Most of these are parochial schools of the Roman Catholic Church, but in addition there are other private schools administered by different organizations

including Protestant churches.

The private schools cater to different sectors of the population, and in a way complement the offerings of the public schools. Thus, private schools vary from modest parochial to highly selective college preparatory schools, where richer Puerto Rican families send their children. Some of the private schools, it must be noted, group classes according to sex, but for the most part, the sexes are integrated, like in the public schools. In addition, many private schools use English as the language of instruction so as to better prepare their students for studying abroad in U.S. colleges or universities.

There are several important private institutions which offer programs at the university level. The most outstanding of these are the Interamerican University, with its main campus in San German, Catholic University in Ponce, and College of the Sacred Heart in San Juan.

Puerto Rico has gone a long way in developing its educational potential in spite of formidable problems of a varied nature, but which have as a common denominator the political status of the Island. Under Spain Puerto Rico's status was more stable than at the present, and culturally Puerto Ricans knew they were Hispanic. But now, under the U.S.A., Puerto Ricans were to be confronted with a collective "identity crisis." Are

we Americans or Puerto Ricans? Can we be Americans without losing our Puerto Rican identity? These and other unresolved questions were to haunt every activity in the Island, and the debate continues today.

The education of Puerto Ricans would reflect this "crisis of identity" throughout the entire century, and one of the foremost of concerns for a long time was the problem of which was to be the language of instruction, English or Spanish.

Shortly after the U.S. troops landed, they were followed by people who reorganized Puerto Rico's system of education according to a U.S. model. The foremost of these was Commissioner of Education Victor S. Clark. To further the Americanization of Puerto Rico, teachers were imported from the U.S. mainland in order to teach native children in the schools. In addition, a Normal School was created in San Juan, in 1903, for training native teachers according to the new goals. The language of instruction was English, and the textbooks were imported from the U.S.

This policy continued intermittently for many years, and was not settled until 1942, when Spanish was again established as the language of instruction in the public schools, with English taught as a "special subject" to all children in the schools. It may be noted, though, that at this date, 1974, English continues to be the

language of instruction in many of the better private schools of the Island, in part for reasons given previously.

Yet, in spite of the problems that have been pointed out, Puerto Rico today boasts one of the most highly developed systems of education in the world, a fact which bears testimony to the dynamic efforts of the Commonwealth and its people. The following statistics bear this out and give a picture of enrollment in the Island as of 1970.

Education:

Total enrollment	760,908
Public day	672,299
Private accredited	88,609
University of Puerto Rico	37,839
Other schools of college level	18,231
Literacy of population over ten years	90%
Numbers of teachers	24,251